



HARFORD COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Harford County
Health Department**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DEPUTY SECRETARY OF PUBLIC HEALTH VISITS HARFORD COUNTY FOR ZIKA TOWN HALL MEETING

Bel Air, MD- June 21, 2016- Amidst media attention about Zika virus, the Harford County health Department will host a Zika awareness town hall meeting on Monday, June 27 at 1 PM. The meeting will be held in the county council chambers located at 212 S. Bond St., Bel Air, MD 21014. This meeting is open to the public and public participation is encouraged.

Dr. Howard Haft, Deputy Secretary of Public Health, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene will provide the most current information on Zika, answer questions, and explain why Zika is a major public health concern.

Zika virus is a virus spread through mosquito bites of Aedes species mosquitoes or sexual transmission from someone who is infected with the Zika virus. The most common symptoms of Zika virus are fever, rash, joint pain and conjunctivitis (pink eye). Because most people don't have symptoms or the symptoms are mild, people may not realize they have been infected. However, Zika virus infection during pregnancy can cause a serious birth defect called microcephaly, as well as other severe fetal brain defects.

"It is imperative that Marylanders are armed with accurate information from the CDC – particularly as temperatures warm and mosquito season begins," said Deputy Secretary Howard Haft.

To date, Maryland has had 25 confirmed cases of Zika virus infection. All have been related to travel from areas of ongoing transmission; none of these cases have involved local transmission. DHMH keeps a record of confirmed cases on its website: <http://phpa.dhmh.maryland.gov/pages/zika.aspx> . For more information about the Zika virus, visit the HCHD website at www.harfordcountyhealth.com or consider attending the town hall meeting on June 27th.

www.harfordcountyhealth.com

